



NOTES

MnTRECC METRO WORK GROUP

Alliance of Early Childhood Professionals

2438 18th Avenue South

Minneapolis, Minnesota 55404

April 21st, 2006

Attendance: Jessica Horning, Leila Goggeley, Betty Bowstring, Betty Jane Schaff-Beck, Sandra Williams

Welcome & General Information

The meeting began with each of the group members introducing themselves and giving a brief overview of the agency they were with and details about their job duties. Betty Jane Schaff-Beck made arrangements to provide the refreshments for the meeting. Sandy reminded members to send in stipend reimbursements if they needed to and also mentioned stipend reimbursement for the food and meeting space. Sandy reviewed the materials in the packets with group members. She discussed the Dakota Ojibwe Language Planning meeting that is a metro area event. Handouts and notes from the last planning meeting were provided to the members of the group. Members reviewed the notes from the last meeting and the following corrections were made to the notes. In the body of the notes change Betsy Bowstring to Betty Bowstring. Sandy gave the group workshop information on NICCA, CEED and the Community Collaborative Brain Development conferences). Sandy provided the group with a handout regarding the availability of scholarships for childcare providers to attend the Brain Development conference in August. She mentioned to the group that the contact person for the scholarships was Tamie Finn from Leech Lake Child Care. Betty Jane said she would attempt to change the dates of their language camp so she and other interested individuals could attend. Sandy provided to the group brochures on the Eager To Learn On-Line classes and a brief overview of the program. Other informational pieces in the folder included: MnTRECC brochure, Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association brochure, map on new Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral Service Areas, MnTRECC newsletter, stipend reimbursement form, Deep Culture Iceberg handout, Dr Suess Lost Poem, MELF grant information, a rough draft of a mission statement, What Is Important Brainstorming handout and a Needs Not Being Met handout.

It was discussed that the Little Earth community is looking for monies for early childhood/development trainings so that all the language speakers/teachers are able to attend professional development trainings. It was mentioned that the group would like to look into grants to help fund this area. It was also discussed that being able to attend the NICCA conference was something they would like to try to find monies to fund.

Brainstorming- Meeting Community Needs

The group looked over the packet with brainstorming ideas that were discussed at the previous meeting. Betty stated that she thought the parent/child interactions and community systems piece could be combined because they both involve empowering parents. It was also mentioned that there was still a need to have an individual in place to work with parents helping them to successfully access community programs. It was noted that intimidation in dealing with the county agencies is still a large obstacle in the community. It was discussed that maybe a solution to this problem is to hire 4-5 individuals as outreach family advocates to assist and empower parents. The lack of money to sustain these positions was discussed and grants would need to be written to fund the project. Another obstacle that was discussed was that outreach to the community is a very difficult process as not everyone has phone service and internet access. It was discussed that flyers need to be used the day before the event to get people to attend. It was also mentioned that many individuals do not take information that is supplied due to literacy issues. Ultimately the most successful way to reach the individuals is to go door to door or bring services to the home. It was also discussed that the most efficient way to find the families who need help is through the LERA and other organizations who already know the families. If outreach workers could be hired they would need to provide a community meeting and use flyers and door to door campaigns to spread awareness about who they are and how they are able to help. The services that the outreach person would provide would be assistance through the county agency process, provision of tutoring for children and parents and training parents on ways to help children with their homework. Other areas the advocate could be utilized would be to have the individual go into the homes and assistance to the parent in the areas of housecleaning, parenting, budgeting, shopping and cooking. To ensure families would participate in the home visit they would be offered a stipend. Another question that came up was who would train the outreach staff? It was mentioned that maybe we could tap into the Americorps program. Information on Americorps will be brought to the next meeting for discussion. It was brainstormed on how we get people to be involved. It was mentioned that stipends and incentives are a key factor in getting people to commit to a meeting or project. Someone mentioned that truancy from school is also a problem and maybe providing gift certificates to students who are not absent from school would diminish truancy. Sandy mentioned a point system where parents earn points for participating in activities and then they exchange their points for items of merchandise or food supplements. Someone else mentioned maybe the parent would receive a \$25 stipend for helping outreach workers (if hired to plan an event, helping with the agenda, flyers, preparation of the food etc). This could teach them life skills and marketable skills when seeking employment in the job market. A question was asked about how we could incorporate culture into the parent advocate position. It was discussed that the outreach workers could help the families in the preparation of traditional foods. The outreach advocate could also be responsible to arrange cultural events which would include field trips to pow-wows, cultural workshops and other community events. The advocate could also be involved in families gaining exposure to traditional ricing, trapping, hunting, beading, moccasin making etc. Betty mentioned the concept of host houses being established. This would consist of homes in each of the Indian communities where parents and children could visit and be exposed to cultural experiences. An example would be a child from the metro area spending time with a host family in a very rural area. Someone asked if the idea of host houses would be just a metro area project. It was

decided that it should incorporate all eleven tribes- a statewide effort. The advocates one from each area would meet twice a year to connect and share the progress or difficulties and evaluate the project. Leila Goggeye mentioned another need that exists is there is not a culturally based preschool program. She stated that she would like to see a Native specific free preschool with language training. It was also mentioned that Little Earth is starting Ojibwe language training and there is a demand for Lakota language training. There was a concern that there will not be enough space/teachers if a Native specific free preschool were available in the community. The demand for parents wanting their children in this type of preschool is immense. It was also noted that in the past efforts have been made to create Native specific Head Start. It was also questioned as to whether there would ever be an opportunity to be a sub-site of Leech Lake. It was also noted that the center would have a child capacity of 20 and would operate a full day program.

The last segment of the meeting was designed to reviewing the rough draft of the mission statement and making the necessary corrections and revisions to this piece as a group. We will continue to work on the mission statement at our next meeting as it is a work in progress.

Betty Jane Schaf-Beck asked that Tamie Finn contact Margaret in regard to sitting on a legislative committee on immersion and language and another committee on a language tract and curriculum room. Sandy will relay the information to Tamie regarding the committees.

Wrap Up

The meeting was concluded. The next meeting will be on June 23rd, 2006 from 9:00-12:00 and Betty Jane will provide the refreshments for the meeting!

Next Meeting:

When: June 23rd, 2006 from 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Where: Alliance of Early Childhood Professionals, Mpls., MN

It was decided that this work group will meet every two months.

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